



## CENTRAL DELTA WATER AGENCY

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October 29, 2002

Paul Marshall  
California Department of Water Resources  
Bay - Delta Office  
1416 Ninth Street  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Re: South Delta Improvements  
Programming - Scoping

Dear Sir:

The CDWA is opposed to increased export pumping until the already occurring problems with water levels, water quality, navigation and fisheries are satisfactorily resolved. Increased export pumping will certainly increase the need for and magnitude of mitigation for present levels of pumping and exports. The mitigation burden for the project with increased pumping may be quite expensive and possibly infeasible. Mitigation for the present levels of pumping and exports could of course be addressed by curtailed pumping. Construction and operation of the mitigation measures for the current levels of export pumping such as the South Delta barriers, dredging and other related actions should be considered as a separate project or at least a separate alternative. One of the alternatives to the mitigation measures project should be curtailed export pumping to eliminate the harm which is to be mitigated. The increased pumping project should be compared against alternatives with increased conservation or reclamation including desalting of brackish groundwater and local water development within the importing areas.

The Delta area in need of protection from export pumping caused lowered water levels, reverse flow, lack of circulation, impaired navigation and damaged fisheries is not limited to areas within the South Delta Water Agency. The most affected area includes portions of the SDWA, CDWA, Contra Costa County, and a portion of San Joaquin County which is not within the SDWA or CDWA. The adversely affected area includes areas both upstream and downstream of the temporary barriers.

The EIR should also address sedimentation, scour, seepage, levee stability and flood water passage. The impacts of the use of the exported water resulting from the increased

pumping rates should also be analyzed including without limitation degradation of water quality in the San Joaquin River. Further degradation of the San Joaquin River will require increased dilution flow thereby reducing water supply in the "areas of origin" from which the dilution flows are taken.

The significance of water quality degradation should not be based simply on violations of the SWRCB standards but rather on whether or not degradation will occur during times when beneficial use is affected. The SWRCB agricultural standards are by themselves insufficient to protect agriculture. Such standards were set assuming that historically available good water quality which is better than the standards will continue to be available. Increased salinity in water for irrigation will limit crop selection and will add to the soil salinity thereby triggering crop losses and/or the need for additional salt leaching either of which could affect the financial feasibility of farming.

*Since dredging will be necessary in areas downstream of the barriers to protect navigation and local water use the dredging to facilitate movement of water to the export pumps should not be limited to Old River but rather should include Victoria Canal, North Canal, Old River around Coney Island and portions of Middle Rivers.*

Previous plans which concentrated the dredging in Old River north of Clifton Court appeared to result in excessive excavations which would adversely affect stability of adjoining levees. Increased seepage will likely result from all dredging, however, the impact to levee stability will be less acute if the needed increase in channel capacity can be developed in multiple channels.

The base case for export pumping should not include increased rates and quantities associated with the so-called JPOD which we believe has not been properly permitted.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dante John Nomellini", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dante John Nomellini  
Co-Counsel

DJN:md